

Remarks

Claims 3-5 and 8-11 are pending in the application. Claims 3-5 and 8-11 are rejected. Claim 8 is amended herein. No new matter is added. All rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 3 and 8 are objected to because the Examiner asserts that they only recite "an Ethernet." This was true for claim 8, which is amended accordingly. However, claim 3 properly recites "an Ethernet packet." No amendment is necessary.

Claims 3-5 and 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yang, et al., (U.S. 5,917,819 – Yang).

The arguments presented in response to the Final Rejection dated August 30, 2006 are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety.

Yang describes a two-stage hierarchical look-up function performed in an ATM switch. A first lookup at a receiving input/output module (IOM) determines all IOMs in the switch that have ports that will transmit a received cell. A second lookup, at each transmitting IOM, determines which ports of the particular IOM will transmit.

In contrast, the invention can generally be understood as a switch that has a lookup to retrieve an initial port bitmask, but is augmented with a network processor that also executes a processing function that modifies the port bitmask. The network processor then sends the look-up engine an indication

that the processing function has been executed. This is very different than what is described in Yang.

Independent claims 3, 8 and 11 recite a first indication from the look-up engine to the processor that associated data has been obtained, and a second indication from the processor to the look-up engine, in response to the first indication, the second indication indicating a processing function has been performed. Yang never describes the claimed second indication.

Each input/output module (IOM) in Yang includes translation circuit 18 and lookup table 20. An IOM receiving a cell (receiving IOM) determines what ports the cell will exit through and generates a local header specifying the IOMs through which the cell will exit (transmitting IOMs). The Examiner points to col. 5 lines 40-col. 6 line 3 as describing the second indication. The Examiners assertion that the overlay is a second indication as claimed is erroneous, because the operations are performed entirely within the transmit IOM. The receiving IOM never receives any notification of what occurs locally at a transmit IOM for a cell.

The lack of any second indication as claimed is clearly shown in Figure 6, below, which is referenced by the Examiner:

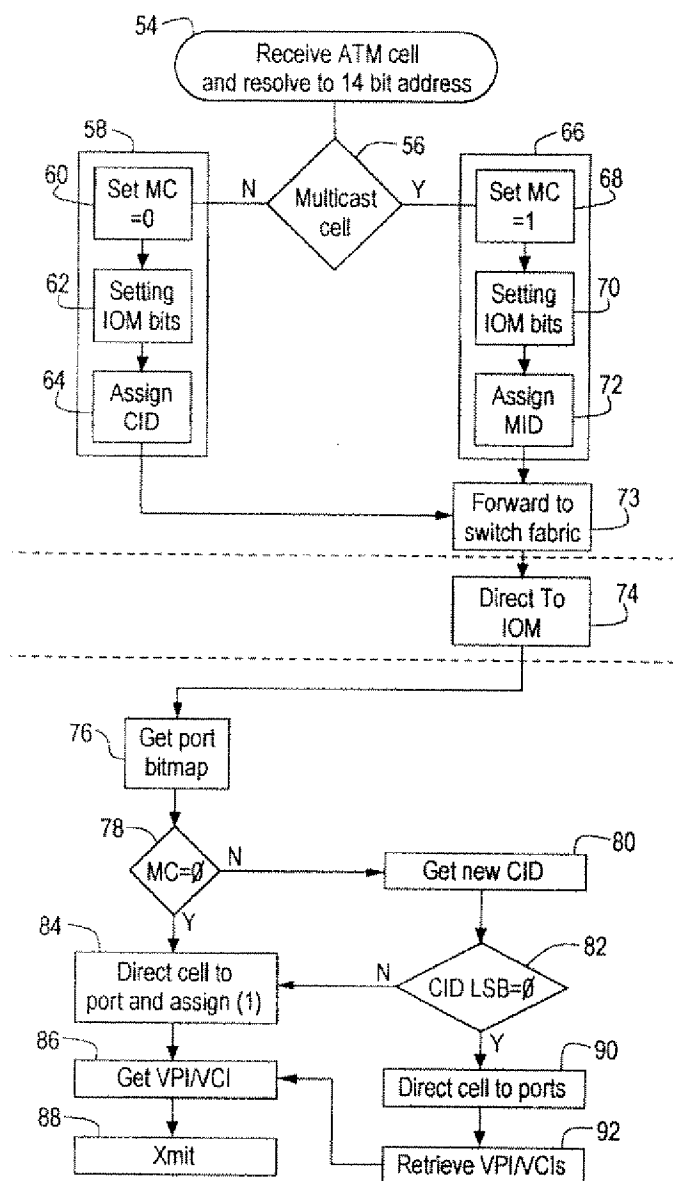


FIG. 6

Yang never notifies the receiving IOM of any of the assigned ports in other transmitting IOMs. Notification would make no sense because the receiving IOM doesn't care. In contrast, the invention requires the second notification from the network processor to the lookup table. An exemplary application of the Invention would be to keep the switch from transmitting until the lookup table has received the second indication so that the Ethernet packet is

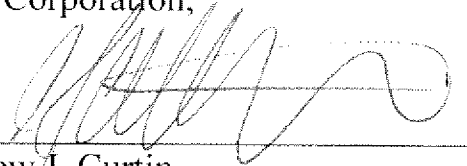
transmitted according to the modification of said initial port bitmask, and not the initial port bitmask. Yang never provides any such second indication.

Therefore, Yang can never be used to make obvious what is claimed.

It is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. Should further questions arise concerning this application, the Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at the number listed below. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper to Deposit Account 50-3650.

Respectfully submitted,
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